

In the Drawings:

The attached sheets of drawings include a change to FIG. 1. An Annotated Sheet showing the change is attached along with the Replacement Sheet.

REMARKS

As a preliminary matter, the Examiner has not acknowledged Applicants' claim for foreign priority because a certified copy of the JP 2003-70401 application has not been filed with the USPTO. This is incorrect. Enclosed is an Artifact Sheet, which Applicants obtained from Private PAIR that appears to indicate that the foreign priority document was received. Additionally, Applicants include a stamped copy of the return receipt post card that indicates that the USPTO received the priority document. For these reasons, acknowledgement of the receipt of the certified copy of the foreign priority document is respectfully requested.

As a further preliminary matter, the Abstract and claim 1, line 7 are amended as suggested by the Examiner, and therefore withdrawal of the objection to the disclosure is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-10 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. In response, Applicants amended claims 1 and 7 as suggested by the Examiner. The features of claims 6, 8, and 9 have been incorporated into independent claim 1, and the suggestions of the Examiner with respect to claims 6 and 8 have also been incorporated into amended claim 1. For this reason, withdrawal of the §112 rejection is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-10 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lee et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,991,699) in view of Nitto Denko Corp. (JP 8-169971 A) and Toto Ltd. (JP 2000-349140 A). In response, Applicants amended claim 1 to

include the feature of previous dependent claims 6, 8, and 9, and respectfully traverse the rejection as it applies to amended claim 1 because the cited references fail to disclose or suggest a resin sheet having a hole through which a lift pin can be inserted. Applicants traverse the rejection of claim 7 because the cited references fail to disclose or suggest a resin sheet that is fixed to at least one electromagnetic chuck by a magnet.

As shown in FIG. 4 of the present application, the resin sheet 32 has holes 32A. As further shown in FIG. 6 of the present application, as a lift pin 30 passes through the lower electrostatic chuck 46 and toward a first substrate 12 after the substrates have bonded, the lift pin 30 passes through the hole 32A (FIG. 4) of the resin sheet 32. Thus, the lift pin 30 pushes up the first substrate 12.

As shown in FIG. 6 of the present application, the center of the resin sheet 32 is not fixed to the electrostatic chuck 46. Therefore, the center of the resin sheet can attach to the first substrate 12 at the center thereof and move with the first substrate as the lift pins 30 raise the first substrate. However, since the ends of the resin sheet 32 are fixed to the electrostatic chuck 46, once the lift pins raise the first substrate 12 a sufficient height, then the first substrate separates from the resin sheet. Advantageously, since the first substrate 12 has separated from the resin sheet 32, it is possible to more readily remove the first substrate, which is bonded to the second substrate 14, from the apparatus for producing the LCD device 22.

Toto, however, cannot achieve the above advantage of the present invention. Although Toto discloses a lift pin 16, there are no holes in the insulator 10 to

allow the lift pin to pass through and separate the insulator from an object 4 located on the insulator. The object 4 cannot be separated from the insulator 10 by using the lift pin 16 since both the object and insulator move together. The machine translation of Toto states in paragraph [0015] that a process object 4 is conveyed with the insulator 10 by the lift pin 16, without touching the object 4. For this reason, the present application is distinguishable over Toto.

Lee and Nitto also fail to overcome the deficiencies of Toto. In fact, the Examiner acknowledges that it is unclear whether Lee even teaches arranging a resin sheet on a surface of at least one of the first and second electrostatic chucks. Nitto also fails to disclose or suggest a lift pin passing through a resin sheet to lift a first substrate away from a resin sheet. For these reasons, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of claim 1, as amended, and its respected dependent claims.

With respect to claim 7, Applicants traverse the rejection because none of the cited references discloses a resin sheet fixed to at least one electrostatic chuck by a magnet. As noted by the Examiner, it is unclear whether Lee even teaches arranging a resin sheet. Additionally, Applicants could find no support in Nitto and Toto for teaching this feature. For this reason, withdrawal of the §103(a) rejection of claim 7 is respectfully requested.

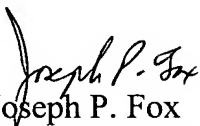
New claims 11-16 are added for consideration. Applicants earnestly solicit allowance of new claims 11-16 based on the features recited in these claims.

For all of the foregoing reasons, Applicants submit that this Application is in condition for allowance, which is respectfully requested. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney if an interview would expedite prosecution.

Respectfully submitted,

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Fig.1

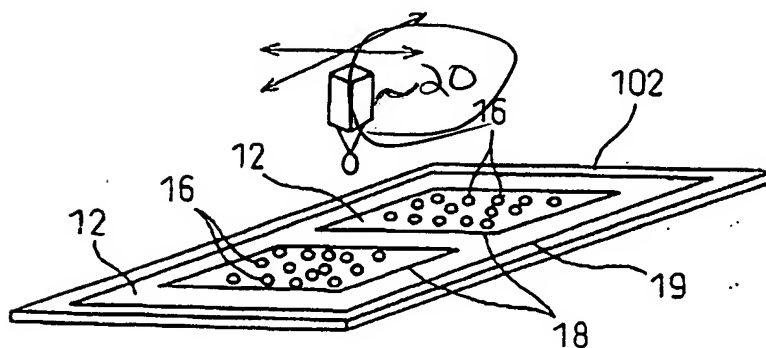


Fig.2

